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Qualitative Research Methods
Political Science 8104, Spring 2014
Thursday 6:10 – 8:00pm (Funger 207)

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Office hours: Thursday 3:30 - 5:30 pm or by appointment

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Course Goals and Description

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This course emphasizes theoretical, practical, and ethical aspects of conducting qualitative research. We cover the basic techniques for collecting, evaluating, and analyzing data in the social sciences (except statistical analysis). In the beginning of the course, students are introduced to debates over the ethical aspects of using certain qualitative methods. Practical issues such as getting IRB approval and funding for a research project are also covered. During the rest of the semester students are introduced to a wide variety of techniques of data gathering such as participant observation and ethnographic field notes; survey research and questionnaires; in-depth and informal interviewing; historiographic techniques; archival research; and, field experiments. Towards the end of the semester, students are also introduced to various methods for analyzing qualitative data such as content analysis, discourse analysis, and interpretive methods. Emphasis is given on various ways that students can quantify qualitative data. Issues of replicability and external validity of qualitative research findings are also addressed.

   Over the course of the semester faculty from our department as well as neighboring institutions will join us in class and discuss their work focusing on the lessons they learned and the challenges they faced while researching their topic.

   A central goal of this class is to help the students move from research design to project implementation, data analysis, and reporting. Students are expected to select a research site, "enter it," get the most out of it, and not hurt the subjects involved in the process. Each student is required to develop a research project (that will not require travel), spend at least two hours per week in "the field" gathering data, and present his/her findings in the last week of class. On top of your individual work, you will work in pairs critiquing/improving each others work during the course of the semester. Individual meetings with me are central to the class but you are also encouraged to reach out to other faculty that have expertise on the topic you are researching.

Course Outline
January 16. Introduction and Overview
January 23. Protection of Human Subjects
January 30. Writing Up a Grant Proposal
February 6. Ethnography: Getting into the "Field"
February 13. Historiographic Techniques
February 20. Participant Observations and Field Notes
February 27. Interviewing (indepth, structured, informal)
March 6. Archival Research
March 20. Surveys and Questionnaires
No class on March 27 (ISA conference)
April 3. Content Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Interpretive Methods
April 10. Field Experiments
April 17. Quantifying Qualitative Data
No class on April 24 (ASN conference)
April 29. *Makeup class I.* Final Presentations
April 30. *Makeup class II.* Final Presentations
Final Paper Due on May 11

Texts

There are 4 books, available for purchase at the GW Bookstore (or online). All books are also on reserve at Gelman Library.

Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton.

Henry E. Brady and David Collier. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman & Littlefield.

John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

H. Russell Bernard. 2002. *Research Methods in Anthropology. Qualitative and Quantitative approaches,* 3rd edition. Altamira Press.

Blackboard:

This course will use Blackboard for announcements and readings (see "Electronic Reserves"). I strongly encourage you to ensure you have access to Blackboard as soon as possible.

Course Requirements:

Students will carry out and write up three memos (45%). Students will make occasional presentations to the seminar (15%). At the end of the course, each student will choose between two options for the final paper (40%). Option 1: write a detailed research proposal on a topic for which field research is appropriate. Option 2: write an article draft based on the research carried out.

Memos 1 and 3 involve 3-minute presentations and require a list of specific concerns and questions you want to pose to the class about your work. Finally, a different student will be responsible for a 5 to 10 minute presentation of the reading material each week (involving a 2 page student memo emailed to everyone before class).

Learning Outcomes:

As a result of completing this course, students will:
1. Become familiar with methodological, practical, and ethical aspects of qualitative research.
2. Alert you to the advantages and disadvantages of different techniques for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing data in the social sciences.
3. Compose a publishable article or a draft of their dissertation prospectus.
4. Move from being consumers to being producers of knowledge.

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Class Policies

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Attendance

Please come to class on time. Feel free to bring a cup of coffee/tea or water, but please don't bring food. Cell phones must be turned off. Laptop are not necessary but if you bring them volume must be set to "mute."

Grading

Three memos	(45%)
Class Presentations	(15%)
Final Paper (due **May 11**)	(40%)

Late Work

Late assignments will lose one third of a full grade (e.g., from an A to a A-, to B+ etc.) for each day after the deadline. There are only two exceptions to the late-assignment policy: illness or family emergency. If either of these circumstances applies, you must provide *written documentation* (such as a doctor's note

if you are ill)*,* **and** you must communicate with me *before the assignment is due* (i.e., emailing me on the morning the assignment is due and saying you are sick is not acceptable for avoiding a penalty). I am willing to accommodate documented requests, but you must communicate with me *before* the assignment is due.

Policy on Religious Holidays:
You should notify me during the first week of the semester of your intention to be absent from class on a day(s) of religious observance. If an assignment falls on a day you will be observing a religious holiday, we will work together to find an alternative time to complete the assignment. Please communicate with me about holidays in advance of the original due date. I do not intend to observe any religious holidays.

Academic Integrity
By taking this course, you are agreeing to abide by the University's Code of Academic Integrity. It states: "Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html
        If you are unsure about any aspect of this policy the Writing Center (http://www.gwu.edu/~gwriter/) can provide assistance on citation or other aspects of writing papers. Claiming ignorance about how or when to cite sources is not an excuse for *academic dishonesty*.

Support for Students outside the classroom
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
        http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

Security
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

Course Schedule

January 16. Introduction and Overview
Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton University Press.
Henry E. Brady and David Collier. 2004. Chapters 8, 12 and 13 of *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Rowman & Littlefield .
James Mahoney and Gary Goertz. 2006. "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research," *Political Analysis* 14: 227-49. [electronic reserve]
Nathaniel Beck. 2006. "Is Causal-Process Observation an Oxymoron?" *Political Analysis* 14: 347-52. [electronic reserve]
Henry E. Brady, David Collier, and Jason Seawright. 2006. "Toward a Pluralistic Vision of Methodology," *Political Analysis* 14: 353-68. [electronic reserve]
Charles C. Ragin, Joane Nagel and Patricia White. 2004. "General Guidance for Developing Qualitative Research Projects," *The Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research*, 9-16. NSF. [electronic reserve]
James Mahoney. 2004. The Distinctive Contributions of Qualitative Data Analysis. *The Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research*. NSF. [electronic reserve]

Recommended:
Robert Adcock and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *APSR* 95(3): 529-46.
Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman. 2006. Complex Causal Relations and Case Study Methods: The Example of Path Dependence. *Political Analysis* 14: 250-267.
Jeff Goodwin and Ruth Horowitz. 2002. Introduction: The Methodological Strengths and Dilemmas of Qualitative Sociology. *Qualitative Sociology* 25(1): 33 - 47.
Michael Burawoy. 1998. The Extended Case Method. *Sociological Theory* 16(1): 4-33. Robert Aunger. 1995. On Ethnography: Storytelling or Science? *Current Anthropology* 36 (1): 97-130.
David A. Snow, Calvin Morrill, and Leon Anderson. 2003. "Elaborating analytic ethnography. Linking fieldwork and theory," *Ethnography* 42(2): 181-200.

Assignment: Meet with advisor to discuss your research project.

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Ethics of Research
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January 23. Protection of Human Subjects

Guest: Cortni Romaine, Office of Human Research, GWU
https://humanresearch.gwu.edu/faqs

The National Commission for the Protection Of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research [The Belmont Report]. 1979. *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research.* Available at: http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html
National Science Foundation. Interpreting the Common Rule for the Protection of Human Subjects for Behavioral and Social Science Research. Available at: www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/hsfaqs.jsp
Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2006. The Ethical Challenges of Field Research in Conflict Zones. *Qualitative Sociology*. 29 (3): 307-41. [electronic reserve]
Yanow, Dvora, and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea. 2008. Reforming Institutional Review Board policy: Issues in implementation and field research. *PS: Political Science and Politics* XLI(3):483-94. Available at: https://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&fid=1905804&jid=PSC&volumeId=41&issueId=03&aid=1905796

Bosk, Charles I., and Raymond G. de Vries. 2004. Bureaucracies of mass deception: Institutional Review Boards and the ethics of ethnographic research. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 595:249-63. [electronic reserve]
Relevant website that presents a consent template specifically for qualitative research: http://www.who.int/rpc/research_ethics/informed_consent/en/

Recommended:
Herbert C. Kelman. 1972. The Rights of the Subject in Social Research: An Analysis in terms of Relative Power and Legitimacy. *American Psychologist* 27(11): 989-1016.
U.S. Health and Human Services. *Institutional Review Board Guidebook*. Available at: www.hhs.gov/ohrp/irb
Maurice Punch. 1998. Politics and Ethics in Qualitative Research. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research. Theories and Issues.* Sage, pp. 156-184.

> Make sure you complete the human subject protection training called COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI) by January 30. You can find the link here: http://humanresearch.gwu.edu/collaborative-irb-training-initiative-citi

Getting Funding
January 30. Writing Up a Grant Proposal

Adam Przeworski and Frank Salomon. 1998. "The Art of Writing Proposals: Some Candid Suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions." Social Science Research Council. Available at: http://www.ssrc.org/publications/view/7A9CB4F4-815F-DE11-BD80-001CC477EC70/
Michael Watts. 2001. "The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal." Dissertation Proposal Workshop, Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley. Available at: http://dusk.geo.orst.edu/prosem/PDFs/InPursuitofPhD.pdf
Rina Agarwala and Emmanuel Teitelbaum**. "**Trends in Funding for Dissertation Field Research: Why do Political Science and Sociology Win So Few Awards?" Manuscript. [electronic reserve]
Useful link: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/grant-proposals-or-give-me-the-money/

> **Memo 1**: Initial project description/Draft grant proposal (post by February 6 noon). A description of the research project, including a clear statement of the research question, an initial choice of a field site, a description of relevant ethnographic research to be carried out, and a statement of what the researcher expects to find. Prepare a short presentation (handout or powerpoint).

Collecting Data
February 6. Ethnography: Getting into the "Field"

Guest: Maggie Paxson

Maggie Paxson. "What is peace?" *aeon Magazine,* 6 December 2012, available at: http://aeon.co/magazine/living-together/margaret-paxson-peace-conflict/

Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2007. Field Research. In *The Handbook of Comparative Politics*, edited by Carles Boix and Susan Stokes. Oxford. [electronic reserve]
John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. Introduction and Chapters 1-3 from *Analyzing Social Settings.*

Recommended:
Christopher B. Barrett and Jeffrey W. Cason.1997. *Overseas Research. A Practical Guide.* Johns
    Hopkins.

Memo 2: draft of IRB proposal (post by February 13 noon).

February 13. Historiographic Techniques

Guest: Evgeny Finkel

Evgeny Finkel, Scott Gehlbach and Tricia D. Olsen. "Does Reform Prevent Rebellion? Evidence from
    Russia's Emancipation of the Serfs" http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2271453
Lisa Blaydes and Eric Chaney, "The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the
    Christian West and the Muslim World before 1500 CE", *American Political Science Review*, 107, 1
    (February 2013). http://www.stanford.edu/~blaydes/feudal.pdf
Jack A. Goldstone and Bert Useem. 1999. "Prison Riots as Microrevolutions: An Extension of State-
    Centered Theories of Revolution." *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 104, No. 4 (January): 985-
    1029
James Mahoney, Erin Kimball, and Kendra L. Koivu. 2009. "The Logic of Historical Explanation in the
    Social Sciences, *Comparative Political Studies*. [electronic reserve]
Ian Lustick. 1996. "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the
    Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review*, pp. 605-618. [electronic reserve]

February 20. Participant Observations and Field Notes

John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. Chapter 4 from *Analyzing Social
    Settings*.
H. Russell Bernard. 2002. Chapters 13, 14, and 15 of *Research Methods in Anthropology,* 203-39.

Recommended:
Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* University
    of Chicago. Chapters 1 to 4.

Memo 3a: First set of field notes, or interview transcripts, or description of archival material, or survey
questionnaires, or field experiment design, or historiographic notes, or interview schedule (post by noon
on February 27). Prepare a short presentation (handout or powerpoint).

February 27. Interviewing (indepth, structured, informal)

Guest: Sharon Wolchik

Fujii, Lee Ann. 2010. "Shades of truth and lies: Interpreting testimonies of war and violence," *Journal of
    Peace Research*, Vol. 47, No. 2: 231-241. [electronic reserve]
John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. Chapter 5 from *Analyzing Social
    Settings*.
H. Russell Bernard. 2002. Interviewing: Unstructured and Semistructured. Chapter 9 of *Research
    Methods in Anthropology, 203-39.*
Symposium: Interview Methods in Political Science. Contributions by Leech, Goldstein, Aberbach and
    Rockman. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35(4): 669-676. [electronic reserve]

Recommended:

Andrea Fontana and James H Frey. "The Interview. From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text." In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research. Theories and Issues,* 61-106. Sage.

Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein, eds., Handbook of Interview Research (Sage, 2002): Carol Warren, "Qualitative Interviewing," pp. 83-101; John Johnson, "In-Depth Intervewing," pp. 103-119; Patricia Adler and Peter Adler, "The Reluctant Respondent," pp. 515- 535; Teresa Odendahl and Aileen Shaw, "Interviewing Elites," pp. 299-316; Anne Ryen, "Cross-Cultural Interviewing," pp. 335-54.

Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin. 2005. *Qualitative Interviewing. The Art of Hearing Data*, second edition. Sage. Chapters 4-9.

March 6. Archival Research

Guest: Eric Grynaviski

Fred I. Greenstein and Richard H. Immerman. 1992. "What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy about Indochina? The Politics of Misperception," *The Journal of American History,* September, pp. 568-587 [electronic reserve].

Cameron Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 3 (4) (November 2002) pp. 351-72 [electronic reserve].

Hope Harrison, "Inside the SED Archives," CWIHP Bulletin [electronic reserve].

Recommended:

Stephen Devereaux and John Hoddinott, "Issues in Data Collection," in Stephen Devereaux and John Hoddinott, eds., Fieldwork in Developing Countries (Lynne-Reiner, 1993) pp. 25-40.

March 20. Surveys and Questionnaires

Guest: Rachel Stein

King, Gary; Christopher J.L. Murray; Joshua A. Salomon; and Ajay Tandon. "Enhancing the Validity and Cross-cultural Comparability of Survey Research," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (February, 2004): 191-207, copy at http://gking.harvard.edu/files/abs/vign-abs.shtml

Daniel Hopkins and Gary King "Improving Anchoring Vignettes: Designing Surveys to Correct Interpersonal Incomparability", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, forthcoming; copy at http://gking.harvard.edu/files/abs/implement-abs.shtml

Useful link: http://gking.harvard.edu/vign/

Recommended:

Frank Bonilla, "Survey Techniques," in Robert Ward et. Al., *Studying Politics Abroad* (Little, Brown, 1964), pp. 134-52.

April 3. Content Analysis, Discourse Analysis, Interpretive Methods

John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. Chapter 9 of *Analyzing Social Settings*.

Wendy D. Roth and Jal D. Mehta. 2002. "The Rashomon Effect. Combining Positivist and Interpretivist Approaches in the Analysis of Contested Events," *Sociological Methods and Research* 31(2): 131-73. [electronic reserve]

Symposium: Discourse and Content Analysis. 2004. *Qualitative Methods Newsletter*. APSA. 2(1): 15 -

39. [electronic reserve]

> **Memo 3b**: Field notes, interview transcripts, description of archival material, survey questionnaires, field experiment design, historiographic notes due on April 10. Prepare a short presentation (handout or powerpoint).

April 10. Field Experiments

Guest: Eric Kramon

Eric Kramon; Joseph Asunka, Sarah Brierley, Miriam Golden, and George Ofosu. "Protecting the Polls: The Effect of Observers on Election Fraud". *Working Paper*

Paluck, E.L. 2010. The promising integration of field experimentation and qualitative methods. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 628: 59-71.

Dunning, Thad. 2008. "Improving causal inference: Strengths and limitations of natural experiments," *Political Research Quarterly* 61 (2): 282-293. [electronic reserve]

Wantchekon, Leonard. 2003. "Clientelism and voting behavior: Evidence from a field experiment in Benin," *World Politics* 55:399–422. [electronic reserve]

> **Memo 3c**: Second set of field notes, interview transcripts, description of archival material, survey questionnaires, field experiment design, historiographic notes (post by April 17)

Analyzing Qualitative Data

April 17. Quantifying Qualitative Data

Guest: Yon Lupu

Coombs, Clyde. 1964. A Theory of Data. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. [electronic reserve]

Hopkins, D. J. and King, G. 2010. "A Method of Automated Nonparametric Content Analysis for Social Science," *American Journal of Political Science*, 54: 229–247. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2009.00428.x/full

Daniel Dohan and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski. 1998. Using Computers to Analyze Ethnographic Field Data: Theoretical and Practical Consideration. *Annual Review of Sociology* 24: 477-98. [electronic reserve]

Aderbach and Rockman. 2002. "Conducting and Coding Elite Interviews." PS, pp. 673-676. [electronic reserve]

David Smilde. 2005. "A Qualitative Comparative Analysis of Conversion to Venezuelan Evangelicalism: How Networks Matter". *American Journal of Sociology* 111(3): 757-96. [Boolean analysis] [electronic reserve]

Recommended:

Emerson, R. et al. Processing fieldnotes: Coding and memoing. In: *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, pp. 142-168, 1995.

Johnson, Allen, and Orna Johnson. "Quality into quantity: On the measurement potential of ethnographic fieldnotes." In: *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*, pp. 161-186, 1990.

Gery W. Ryan and H. Russell Bernard. 2003. Data Management and Analysis Methods. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. 259-309. Sage.

Timothy Wickham-Crowley. 1989. Understanding Failed Revolution in El Salvador: A Comparative Analysis of Regime Types and Social Structures. *Politics and Society* 17(4): 511-537. [Boolean analysis]

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Presentations

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April 30. Makeup class I. Final Presentations

John Lofland, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn Lofland. 2006. Chapter 10 of *Analyzing Social Settings*.

Final Paper Due on May 15